

Youth Triathlon Advise Part 3: The Transitions & Bike by Mike DeCinti (reprinted from The Robesonian)

As many of you know, for most of my professional career I was a teacher, and what kind of teacher would I be if I didn't review? So get out your notes, and lets review.

- Robeson County's First-Ever Youth Triathlon will be held Saturday, August 28th in Pembroke.
- The event is open to ALL kids between the ages of 6-15.
- The event is limited to the first 200 who register. So don't delay!

OK, now that we got that out of the way, let's get on to today's lesson: The Transition Area and Bike Portion.

How many of you did I already lose with the term "transition area?" Well if you're new to triathlons, don't feel bad. However the transition area is probably one of the most important parts of any triathlon and that's why we're going to discuss it now. Think of the transition area as your little private space to help you get through the race. It is where you will park your bike, keep your gear and "transition" from one event to the next.

You actually start your day in the transition area. When you first arrive at the race site you will see a large area fenced off that contains several large metal bike racks. Each bike will be numbered and these numbers will match your race/bib number that you received the night before the race. You will want to find the rack and your specific number. This is your personal space. It's here that you will rack your bike. You will also set up all of your bike and running gear (socks, shoes, helmet, shirt *w/ race number attached*, gloves, etc.) and anything else you might have (water, gatorade, snacks.) The space will be relatively small, so you have to keep everything nice and organized and easy to get to.

Once you set up your transition area, you will then take your race/bib number and get your timing chip and body markings. These are so we can officially time you and keep track of you during the race. After that, you won't be back to the transition area until you are finished with the swim.

After the swim you need to get ready for the bike ride, so you will exit the pool and head to the transition area. You will of course go to your spot and get whatever you need to start your ride. You will be in a bathing suit so you will put on your shirt (which has your race/bib number attached), socks, shoes and your helmet. You may also decide to wear gloves or sunglasses, but that's up to you. You will then grab your bike and walk it out of the transition area. This is important. You are not allowed to ride your bike in the transition area. When you exit the transition area you will see a place for you to "mount" your bike. Which means when you are finished with the bike portion, you will first dismount your bike before you re-enter the transition area.

Now before I explain your next trip to the transition area, let me talk about the bike portion. The 6-10 year olds will ride 3 miles and the 11-15 year olds will ride 6 miles. The route is an out-and-back, which the younger kids will do once and the older kids will do twice. There will be plenty of volunteers and police on the course and all roads will be closed to traffic, so everyone will be safe. There will be one water stop on the course at the 1.5-mile marker (older kids will pass it twice), but racers must pull over to the right side of the road and come to a complete stop to get water.

OK, so after your bike ride is over you will head back to the transition area. Before entering you will dis-mount your bike and walk it back to your spot. The transition from bike to run goes much quicker because all you will have to do is park your bike, remove your helmet, and off you go. And the next time you go in the transition area will be after you finish the race to get your gear. By the way, you'll be wearing two new things at the end of the race, a finisher's medal and big smile on your face.

On August 15th I will wrap up this series talking about the run portion of the race and pointers to get you from start to finish. Until then please visit www.triwarriors.net for more details.

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